# Sions Groans for her Diſtreſſed,

## OR

## Sober Endeavours to prevent Innocent Blood, and to ſtabliſh the Nation in the beſt of SETTLEMENTS.

## Grounded upon Scripture, Reaſon, and Authority.

## Proving it the undoubted right of Chriſtian Liberty under different perſwaſions, in matters Spiritual, to have equal Protection as to their Civil Peace.

## Unto which is added the Teſtimony of fifteen ANTIENTS.

Humbly offered to the Kings Majeſty, Parliament and People.
And left unto their Serious View.

By *The. Monck, Joſeph Wright, Fran. Stanley, &c.*

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Matth. 7. 12. *Therefore all things whatſoever you would that men ſhould do to you, do you even ſo to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.*

Mat. 13. 28, 29, 30. *The ſervants ſaid unto him, wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? but he ſaid nay, leſt while ye gather up the Tares, ye root up alſo the Wheat with them, let both grow together in the field* (the world) *until the Harveſt, which is the end of the world.*

Act. 5. 38. *And now I ſay unto you, refrain from theſe men, and let them alone, for if this Counſel or Work be of man, it will come to nought, but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it, leſt haply ye be found to fight againſt God.*

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*London*, Printed for the Authors, and are to bee ſold in *London*, and at *Weſtminſter*. 1661.

# TO THE READER.

Courteous Reader,

*With burthened hearts as once the two Disciples travelling unto* Emaus, *spake to Christ a supposed stranger, so speak we unto thee, Art thou a stranger in our Island, and hast not known the things that have come to pass in these daies, while the father hath been divided against the son, and the son against the father, three against two, and two against three, Even a mans foes they of his own household; so great have been our Divisions like* Reuben, *that no sooner light hath been by Gods grace manifested to the begetting Children of the Free-woman, but presently they are persecuted by the Children of the Bond-woman; and how unpleasing this is to Jesus Christ, and how unlike his golden Rule that saith,* And all things what soever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the Law, and the Prophets. *We say how unpleasing this is to him, judge upon thy serious perusal of this following Treatise, which we commend to thy perusal in thy most retired consideration, when thou canst read with thy thoughts, least cumbred with other business, our design in what we beg may be perused, is general good, in setting at liberty that which God made free, even the Conscience. Thou canst not bee ignorant of the great Controversie that now is on foot as to uniformity in Worship, to impose by violence, where they cannot perswade, under seeming pretence of Scripture warrant and antiquity, the contrary to which is asserted in the words of truth and soberness, by Scripture, reason, and practice of the Primitive times.*

*And least violence and oppressing of conscience, should run up to that height till it terminate in the blood of some who are dear, and their blood precious in the eyes of the God of all the Earth, therefore have we committed this unto the view of all men as part of the work of our Generation in singleness of heart, and remain lovers and prayers for all men that we might live a peaceable, and a quiet life in all godliness and honesty.*

Farewel.

The eight day of the 3 Month, 1661.

*Tho. Monck.* *Fran. Stanley.*
*Joseph Wright.* *Will. Reynolds.*
*Geo. Hamon.* *Will. Jeffery.*

*Sions*

# *Sions Groans for her Diſtreſſed,*

## OR

# Sober Endeavours to prevent Innocent Blood, and ſtabliſh the Nation in the beſt of Settlements.

AS all the holy Scriptures have been written afore-time for our learning and admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come; So that particular Book of the *Revelation*, is of ſuch excellent worth, *That bleſſed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this Propheſie, and keep thoſe things that are written therein, for the time is at hand.* In which Book, in no leſs than three ſeveral Texts it is teſtified, that the Nations of the world, and inhabiters of the Earth, with their Kings, would drink the wine of the fornication of that abominable Harlot, that ſitteth upon Peoples, and Multitudes, and Nations and Tongues, and by her ſorceries deceiveth all Nations until they become drunk, and altogether uncapable (in that condition) to receive the pure waters of life, tendred to them in the plain way of the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus. Rev. 14. 8. Chap. 17. 2. and 18. 3.

This with grief of heart we ſee too viſible, for the Doctrine and Traditions of *Rome* (who is myſtery *Babylon*, and ſince her Apoſtacy the Mother of Harlots, *For the woman which thou ſaweſt, is that great City which reigneth over the Kings of the earth*) have ſo corrupted the earth, and clouded the underſtandings of the ſons of men, that the great and moſt important truths of God cannot bee received or beleeved. Chap. 17. 18.

The reaſon why the Nations are ſo generally beguiled in the concernments of their ſouls, is becauſe the greateſt

part being carnal and unregenerate perſons; they are naturally inclined to ſuch wayes of worſhip, as are accompanied with external pomp and glory, and therefore the Spirit of the Lord teſtifies that the great Harlot filleth her abominations, and filthy fornications in a golden cup, like the Phyſitian that guilds his bitter Pill, that his Patient may the better ſwallow it. Chap. 17. 4.

Thus doth the *Romiſh* Church, and her followers, who to make their carnal Ordinances finde the better reception, deliver them to the inhabitants of the earth by ſuch as are honourable amongſt men in worldly Sanctuaries, moſt magnificently built and adorned, endowed with Lordly Revenues, accompanied with Muſick and Voyces, and Pontificial Veſtments, yea many Superſtitions and Caſtoones meerly earthly and ſenſual (if not worſe) which we ſay ſo pleaſeth the earthly and unregenerate man, that he is ready to ſay, This is the beſt Religion, which is of moſt eſteem in the Nations, and accompanied with all earthly glory and delights, altogether forgetting, that ſtrait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leads to life, and few there be that finde it, And that which is highly eſteemed among men, is abomination in the ſight of God. Mat. 7. 14. Luke 16. 15.

And if it had been the minde of the Lord Jeſus, that the Goſpel ſhould have been recommended unto the world, and accompanied with theſe Ceremonies and Formalities that are practiſed in the worſhip of the Nations, or were uſed amongſt the *Jews*, it is very ſtrange we ſhould not have one word for it in all the Scriptures of the New Teſtament, when Chriſt was as faithful over his houſe, as *Moſes* was over his, and is to be heard in all things as *Moſes* himſelf commanded; and there will be little encouragement to touch with the *Gentile* Nations in their ſuperſtitious Ceremonies, when it ſhall be conſidered, that the Rites and Ceremonies of the Moſaical law being once the appointments of God, did far exceed in glory what the ſhallow inventions of the *Romiſh*, or any of the National Churches are able to produce, yet wholly taken away; which the Author to the *Hebrews* notably proves, ſaying, *Then verily the firſt Covenant had alſo Ordinances of Divine ſervice, and a worldly San-* Heb. 3. 2, 5, 6. Deut. 18 18, 19

*Sanctuary, for there was a Tabernacle made, the first wherein was the Candlestick and the Table, and the Shew-bread which is called the Sanctuary, and after the second vail the Tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all.* They had also their High-priest, and offerings, and linnen Ornaments belonging to this Covenant; but saith our Author, *If that first Covenant had been faultless, then no place had been sought for the second, and he taketh away the first, that he might establish the second.* Heb. 8. 7. Chap. 10. 9.

And now under the second Covenant, which is the Gospel, the *Romish* Bishop, or any man on earth, cannot be our High-priest, *For we have such an High-priest who is set on the right hand of the Throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the Sanctuary, and of the Tabernacle which the Lord pitcheth, and not man.* Chap 8. 1, 2.

And under this second Covenant, God hath not promised his presence to any Temple built of wood and stone, as of old, *For now the most High dwelleth not in Temples made with hands,* as the superstitious Clergy would perswade us, but where two or three are gathered together in the name of Christ, there is he in the midst of them, although it be in a House, by a Rivers side, on a Mountain, or in a Wilderness, such little respect hath he to place. Act 7. 48.

As little respect hath God to persons, because of any honour or esteem they may have in the world, either for birth or natural endowments, but such as usually are foolish, weak, and base in the eyes of the world, doth he make use of in the work of the Gospel, that so the learned Doctors and Masters of Arts may not have wherewithall to boast. 1 Cor. 1. 26, 27, 28, 29.

Which despised way of the Gospel we well know becomes a great stumbling block to the *Gentile* Nations, as in the first delivery of it it did unto the *Jews*, who would not receive the Lord of life, nor his Doctrine, because not accompanied with that earthly glory which their corrupt hearts affected, and rather would retain that exploded dispensation of the Law which God had departed from, than they would receive the glorious Gospel by those hands the wisdome of God thought fit to tender it, for which ob-

stinacy, as the Apostle *Paul* saith, *The wrath of God is come upon them to the uttermost*, even to the laying waste their Temple and Cities, the great slaughter of their persons, and captivating their posterity as at this day. Let therefore the *Gentile* Nations fear, but more especially this Nation, for some such spirit seems to appear amongst those that would retain their empty and dead forms of worship, which God hath shewed his displeasure against, and have no footing in the whole Book of God, rather than they will receive the pure way of God, without the mixture of humane Inventions and Traditions.

1 Thess. 2. 16.

But the bare rejection of Truth, and imbracing of error is not all the evil, that the Nations generally are ingaged in by the Church of *Rome*, and her followers; but for to compleat and fill up the measure of their iniquities, like *Nebuchadnezzar*, nothing less must be inflicted on the servants of the most High God, that cannot bow down to the golden Image of their Inventions, than the fiery furnace of Persecution, many times unto death it self.

And this the people of the Lord must endure, it being as certain their portion to be persecuted, as it is the practice of the false Church to persecute, who build their superstructures of Will-worship, on no other foundations but Violence and Cruelty; else what mean these imprisonments, banishments, wars and massacres, which have been made in *Europe* for Religion; what troubles and desolations in *Germany*, civil commotions in *France*, cruelties exercised in the *Netherlands* by that Darling of the Romish Church, the Duke of *Alva*, & others? what Massacres in *France*, *Piedmont*, and *Ireland*, to carry on the business of Religion, for the satisfaction of a blood-thirsty and insatiable Clergy, when the Disciples of the Lord Jesus were to use no other violence against those that rejected them, than to shake the dust from their feet, which should be a witness against them at the Tribunal of Jesus, not *Cesars*? yea this Popish principle of propagating Religion by the Sword, hath reached the poor *Americans*, many hundred thousands of them having been destroyed, because they would not be Proselites, no other cause being to be given; for it cannot be supposed,

Act. 13. 51. Mat. 10. 14, 15.

those

thoſe remote and ſimple people had ſo much as known the *Spaniard*, much leſs done any injury unto him; our own Nation hath alſo felt the rage of this fury, both before, and in the Reign of Queen *Mary*, and the wiſe may judge whether the Biſhops endeavours to impoſe their Liturgy in *Scotland*, with their cruelties in *England*, did not contribute much to our late unhappy troubles. But certainly if the *Romiſh* and National Clergy were guided by the Spirit of God, the Authority of Scripture, or force of Argument to ſupport their forms of worſhip, they would not then impoſe them by external force, when by ſuch proceedings they render themſelves altogether unlike the Lord Jeſus the Prince of peace, who came not to deſtroy mens lives, but to ſave them.

But on the contrary it will evince to all that have their eyes open, how like they are to that woman which is drunken with the blood of the Saints, and with the blood of the Martyrs of Jeſus, in whom will be found the blood of Prophets, and of Saints, and of all that were ſlain on the earth. Although as our Lord and Maſter hath foretold, in killing others, ſhe may think ſhe doth God ſervice. Rev. 17.6. Chap. 18.24. Joh. 16.2.

Leſt therefore thoſe unchriſtian principles of perſecution for conſcience, which troubleth the world, ſhould take root in this Nation, to the ſtirring up mens mindes to ſhed the blood of the innocent, the guilt whereof is able to ſinke the moſt flouriſhing Kingdomes into an ocean of miſery and calamity, we have here following written ſome arguments (which we humbly offer to all men) to prove, how contrary to the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus, and good reaſon it is for any Magiſtrate by outward force to impoſe any thing in the worſhip of God, on the conſciences of thoſe whom they govern, but that liberty ought to be given to all ſuch as diſturb not the civil peace, though of different perſwaſions in Religous matters.

In which Diſcourſe we neither deſire nor deſign, to diminiſh any of that power which God hath given to the Kings Majeſty that now Reigneth, whom we own to be chief Magiſtrate and Governour of theſe Nations, over all perſons as well Eccleſiaſtical as Temporal, and to all his Com-

Commands, that do not oppoſe the Scriptures of truth, shall we yeeld active obedience not only for wrath but alſo for conſcience ſake, and if any thing otherwiſe ſhall be required, we ſhall be paſſive, and ſuffer what may be inflicted on us for our conſciences; for whatever hath been ſuggeſted by evil men, yet that Magiſtracy and Government is an Ordinance of God, hath been frequently aſſerted in our diſcourſes and writings, and is by us believed, as fully as the Apoſtle *Paul* in the 13 of the *Romans* hath taught: And all that we deſire, which is dearer to us than our lives, is that our ſpirits and conſciences may bee left free to ſerve the Eternal God, which ought to be granted us, ſeeing as the ſame Apoſtle ſaith in theſe caſes, *We ſhall every one of us give an account of himſelf to God.* But to our Arguments, the firſt of which ſhall be that which ſome of us made uſe of to the Kings Majeſty from *Maidſtone*, which we have not yet ſeen weakned.

See the Confeſſion of faith printed in *March* 1659. and ſince reprinted, and preſented to his Majeſty.

Rom. 14. 12.

Let it therefore be conſidered, if any Magiſtrate under Heaven in the dayes of the Goſpel, hath power by outward force to impoſe any thing in the worſhip and ſervice of God on the conſcience, it is given him as he is a Magiſtrate only, or as a Chriſtian ſo conſidered, but that no ſuch power is given by God to any Magiſtrate, appears,

1 Becauſe if Magiſtrates as ſuch, have ſuch an Authority, then all Magiſtrates in all Nations have the ſame power; then if we lived in *Turky*, muſt we receive the *Alchoran*, and be worſhippers of *Mahomet*; if in *Spain*, be Papiſts, in *England*, ſometimes Papiſts as in *Henry* the eighths dayes, Proteſtants in *Edward* the ſixths, Papiſts again in Queen *Maries*, and Proteſtants again in Queen *Elizabeths*, and ſo for ever as the Authority changes Religion, wee muſt do the ſame, but God forbid, for nothing is more abſurd.

2 Seeing in the dayes of the Goſpel, the Lord Jeſus is that great Prophet, which as *Moſes* ſaid is to be heard in all things, and as himſelf teſtifieth, *Hath all power in heaven and earth given unto him*; Then if Magiſtrates have power to impoſe any thing by outward force on the conſcience, it muſt be committed unto them from the Lord Jeſus, and written in the

Mat. 28. 18.

the Scriptures of the New Teſtament, or elſe how doth it appear, but the whole ſtream of the New Teſtament Scriptures run clear in another channel, and there is no coleur for any ſuch ſuppoſition, as farther appears.

Let no man think of men above that which is written, 1 Cor. 4. 6.

3 Becauſe the Apoſtles themſelves (that gave forth thoſe Commands which are written in Scripture to be obedient to Magiſtrates) refuſed to be obedient to their Rulers; when they were commanded to forbear, that which they judged part of the worſhip of God, and ſaid, *Whether it be right in the ſight of God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge yee.* Acts 4. 19. 20.

4 All the Scriptures of the New Teſtament, that enjoyn obedience unto Magiſtrates, were written when the *Romans* had the Empire of the world, whoſe Emperours were for the moſt part (if not all) heatheniſh Idolators, for the firſt three hundred years until *Conſtantines* time, it therefore cannot be ſuppoſed, that any of thoſe Texts of Scripture that call for obedience to Magiſtrates, intend an obedience in matters of faith, for then the Chriſtians that lived under thoſe Emperours, muſt needs have denied Chriſt, and worſhipped the *Roman* gods, as ſome of the Emperours commanded.

As *Dioclefian* *Euſeb.* 8. Book. 3. Chap.

5 If Magiſtrates as ſuch, have power from God in the dayes of the Goſpel, to command in ſpiritual matters, and to puniſh thoſe that obey not, then muſt Chriſtians ſurely be actually obedient, not only for wrath, but alſo for conſcience ſake, becauſe elſe they ſhould reſiſt the Ordinance of God; but if this were true, the way to heaven would be ſo far from being ſtrait and narrow, that any might be a Diſciple of Chriſt without taking up the croſs and following him; yea all ſufferings and perſecutions ſhould wholly be at an end, and they that undergo them ſhould utterly be condemned (for it is not to be ſuppoſed there could be perſecutions, if all the commands of the Magiſtrate in ſpiritual cauſes were actually to be obeyed) It therefore reaſonably follows, that no Magiſtrate as ſuch, hath power from God to compel in ſpiritual cauſes, but on the contrary for Saints to endure perſecutions and ſufferings rather than actually obey, is abundantly by the Lord foretold, rewarded and juſtified,

Luke 14. 27.

Rev. 7. 14, 15. Jam. 1. 12. Act. 14. 22. 2 Tim. 2. 11. 12.

as by the Scriptures of the New Testament appears. But if it be objected, that neither the Magistrate is to command, nor the subjects actually to obey any thing but what is according to the minde of God.

It is answered, that all Magistrates suppose what ever they impose to be so; but the question is, who is to determine, for if the Magistrate, or any other man, or men, have power from God to judge and determine what is lawful for men to obey, then no room is left for them to dispute the lawfulness of any of his commands, it being their duty to obey what ever is commanded, and so as it hath been said before, the Cross of Christ ceases; but if every one shall give account for himself to God, then it reasonably follows that every man judge for himself in matters spiritual, and therefore for the Magistrate to compel, cannot be warrantable by Scripture or Reason.

Rom. 14. 12.

Josh. 24. 15.

Again, that the power to judge and determine in spiritual matters, is not in a Magistrate as such, *Gallio* the *Roman* Deputy of *Achaia*, well understood, when the *Jews* made insurrection with one accord against *Paul*, and brought him to the Judgement seat, saying, *This fellow perswadeth men to worship God contrary to the Law* (which almost ever since hath been the great cry by all sorts of the National Clergy, whose turns it hath been to have the Magistrate on their sides, against all others that have differed from them) but *Gallio* said, *If it were a matter of wrong, or wicked lewdness, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you, but if it be a question of words, and names, and of your Law, look yee to it, for I will be no judge of such matters: And he drave them from the Judgement seat.* Which worthy example, if Magistrates would be perswaded to follow, by judging and punishing onely Civil injuries and wrongs, and leaving Spiritual differences to bee decided and judged, and punished by Jesus Christ according to the Gospel, they then would finde themselves and Governments quickly free from many inconveniences that now they are involved in, about deciding Religious Controversies, with external force and power.

Act. 18. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16.

But in that he suffered *Sosthenes* to be beaten, he did not well, it being a civil injury.

And now that no Magistrate, although a Christian, hath power

power to be a Lord over anothers faith, or by outward force to impoſe any thing in the worſhip of God, is alſo very clear.

1 Becauſe the Lord Jeſus himſelf, would never by any outward force compel men to receive him or his Doctrine, for when his Diſciples ſuppoſing they might uſe violence (as under the Law) would have commanded fire to come down from heaven (as *Elias* did) to conſume them that would not receive him, Chriſt turned and rebuked them, ſaying, *Ye know not what ſpirit ye are of, for the Son of man is not come to deſtroy mens lives, but to ſave them*; and moſt remarkable doth it appear, that it is not the intent of the Lord Jeſus, that judgement ſhould be executed on thoſe that reject his words to the puniſhing them in their bodies and eſtates in this life (as under the Law) from his own ſayings, written *John* 12.47,48. which ſpeak thus, *If any man hear my words, and beleeve not, I judge him not, for I came not to judge the world, but to ſave the world, and he that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him, the word that I have ſpoken, the ſame ſhall judge him at the laſt day.* And the Apoſtles alſo were ſo far from propagating the Goſpel by outward violence and force, that all their proceedings were by intreaty and perſwaſion, and in caſe of reſiſtance to ſhake the duſt from their feet as a witneſs againſt their oppoſers; nor will it avail to ſay, becauſe the Magiſtrate exerciſes authority on civil and temporal things, which the Lord Chriſt would not, that therefore in ſpiritual things they may do the ſame; unleſs it may be ſuppoſed the Magiſtrates right to have ſupremacy over the world to come, in all heavenly and eternal things, becauſe God hath given him power over the world that now is in earthly and temporal things, which may be conjectured upon as good ground from what is written, as that a Magiſtrate under the Goſpel-diſpenſation, hath more power in ſpiritual cauſes, than the Lord Chriſt, or his Apoſtles would exerciſe, eſpecially ſeeing there is not the leaſt warrant for any

Luke 9. 44,45, 46.

Mat. 10. 14. Act. 13. 51.

As the dividing Inheritances, &c.

ſuch power from Chriſt or the Apoſtles, from any
Iſa.8.20. thing that is written in the Scriptures of the New Teſtament, *And to the Law, and to the Teſtimony, if they ſpeak not according to this word, it is becauſe there is no light in them.*

2 If any men, as Chriſtians, under heaven have had any ſuch power in the dayes of the Goſpel, the Apoſtles and Elders in the Primitive times muſt needs have had it; but this they utterly diſclaimed, as *Paul* in the 2 *Cor.*1.24. *Not for that we have Dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy, for by faith yee ſtand:* Yea the
Mat.20.25. Lord Jeſus when they ſtrove for Domination forbids it, ſaying, *Yee know that the Princes of the Gentiles exerciſe Dominion over them, and they that are great do exerciſe Authority upon them, but it ſhall not bee ſo amongſt you*; even ſo ſaith *Peter* ſpeaking to the Elders, *Feed*
1 Pet.5.2,3. *the flock of God which is amongſt you, taking the overſight thereof not by conſtraint, but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready minde, neither as being Lords over Gods Heritage, but being Examples to the flocke*: Why therefore the Chriſtian Religion ſhould bee built and ſupported by Violence and Cruelty, when the Foundation was laid, and the work carried on all the Apoſtles dayes, and ſome hundreds of years after, by a quite contrary meanes, is a queſtion would bee reſolved by thoſe, whoſe ſtrongeſt Argumen ts, for the ſupport of their Religion, is take *HIM JAYLOR*: For ſuch is the difference between the way which the Apoſtles and Primitive Saints took in carrying on the worke of the Goſpel, and approving themſelves to bee the Miniſters of God, and the way now uſed by the National Clergy, that nothing is more unlike; they being
2 Cor.5.20. Ambaſſadours for the Prince of Peace, did in his ſtead beſeech and pray the diſobedient to bee reconciled to God, never ſtirring up the Nations to ruine, and deſtroy by external Violence thoſe that oppoſed them in
1 Cor.4.12,13 their Miniſtry; but as the Apoſtle *Paul* ſaith, *Being reviled*,

*railed, we bless, being persecuted, wee suffer it, being defamed, wee intreat, giving no offence in any thing, that the Ministery bee not blamed, but in all things approving our selves as the Ministers of God, in much Patience, in Afflictions, in Necessities, in Distresses, in Stripes, in Imprisonments, in Tumults, in Labours, in Watchings, in Fastings, by Pureness, by Knowledge, by Long-suffering, by Kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by Love unfeigned, &c.* O yee Rulers of the World, and Inhabitants of the Earth, this was the way the Lord of all things, with his Disciples and followers took, to plant and establish the Doctrine of the Gospel in the hearts and affections of the Sons of men. Be yee not therefore unlike those whom you say you follow, by imposing your Doctrines and Traditions by the Violence of Penal Laws and Edicts, to the Imprisoning, Banishing, and Spoyling the Goods of the Conscientious, causing them (as the Saints of old) to bee Destitute, Afflicted, and Tormented, although for their innocency and uprightness, the world is not worthy of them.

2 Cor. 6. from v. 3. to the 10.

Heb. 11. 36, 37, 38.

3 It is very plaine that the Lord Jesus himselfe, in his Parable of the Tares, and Wheat, forbids any outward force or violence, to bee exercised upon false Worshippers and Hereticks as such, for by the Tares, which he forbids the pulling up cannot be intended the Transgressors of the Second Table, such as Theeves, Murderers, or any that should doe that Civil injury or wrong unto another, which hee would not have done unto himselfe, for all confesse with one consent, that the Magistrates Authority reaches such, neither can it bee intended that the children of the wicked one in any sense that visibly appear to be so, should bee tolerated in the Church, for that destroyes the power of Excommunication: That which unavoidably then follows, is, That although men are Tares, or the Chil-

Mat. 13.

dren of the wicked one, by erring in the worſhip of God, yet ſhould they not bee plucked up, but tolerated in the Field of the World, untill the Harveſt ſhall come at the end of this World, when the Angels who are to bee the Reapers (and infallibly can diſtinguiſh between the Tares and the Wheat, which no Magiſtrate now can) ſhall gather the Tares in bundles, and caſt them into a Furnace of fire; there ſhall bee wayling, and gnaſhing of teeth. Which Scripture ſo eminently concludes for a Toleration, that the greateſt Enemies to true Liberty, have been at a great loſſe, when they have endeavoured to make it ſpeak ſome other thing, as that Expoſitor is, who ſayes, It ſeems to him not to note the duty of the Civil Magiſtrate, but the event of Gods Providence, that God would permit the cohabitation of the wicked in the World with the juſt; not that Magiſtrates or Miniſters ſhould permit them, and not by Civill puniſhment, or Eccleſiaſtical, remove them out of the Church, or the World.

J.T. Supplem. p.29.l.32.

But if men did not fight againſt Truth, they would not ſo eminently contradict their own ſayings, for who can beleeve that it ſhould bee the minde of God, to permit the co-habitation of the wicked in the World with the juſt, as aforeſaid, and yet the Magiſtrate ſhould not permit them, but remove them by Civill puniſhment out of the World. Hath the Magiſtrate power to remove thoſe out of the World, that God would have permitted to live. How ſoon may a Magiſtrate, if guided by ſuch Doctrine, bring the blood of the Innocent upon himſelfe and Nation? and innocent blood the Lord will not pardon, 2 *King.* 24. 4. It therefore highly concernes all Magiſtrates, before they perſecute any for matters of Faith or Worſhip, to ſee they have a better warrant for ſo doing, than the word of men, which will not ſecure them at that day when God ſhall judge the ſecrets

crets of men, by Jeſus Chriſt, according to the Goſpel, which will bee found to be the Book that ſhall be opened, when the dead both ſmall and great ſhall ſtand before God to be judged by what is written therein, according to their works; as the Lord Jeſus ſaith, *The Word that I have ſpoken, the ſame ſhall judge you at the laſt day*; and this is his word, to *Let both Tares and Wheat grow together in the Field of the World until the Harveſt.* Rom. 2. 16. Rev. 20, 12. So many as have lived where the word of the Goſpel comes

4. It can in no wiſe be ſafe, for Magiſtrates in the dayes of the Goſpel, to perſecute and deſtroy thoſe that are contrary minded in Religious matters, becauſe of their fallibility, and that is the very reaſon why the Lord Jeſus, in the foremention'd Parable, forbids gathering up the Tares, leſt the Wheat be rooted up along with them. That Magiſtrates may erre in Spiritual and Religious matters, woful experience hath taught the world in all ages, the Lord of Life himſelf was put to death, for ſuppoſed blaſphemy and wickedneſs, and accuſed for being an enemy unto *Ceſar*, which great miſtake was committed through ignorance, as *Peter* ſaith, *And now Brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as alſo did your Rulers.* And at this day, what miſtakes are continued in Magiſtrates about Religion, ſome being *Calviniſts* as in *Holland*, and *Geneva*, more *Lutherans*, but the greateſt part Papiſts, and each of theſe condemneth, and many times perſecuteth the other for Hereſie or Superſtition, unavoydably therefore it follows, that ſome of theſe muſt erre, but we need not go far for the proof of this in one and the ſame perſon, who receives that at one time for truth, which at Mat. 13. 29. Act. 3. 17. In Europe.

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nother time must be persecuted for error; this appeared notably in King *Henry* the Eighth, who persecuted the Protestants to death, and writes against *Luther*, for which the Pope gives him the Title of Defender of the Faith, and yet a while after receives some of *Luthers* Doctrine, and rejects the Supremacy and Authority of the Pope, and serves the Papists as he did the Protestants; nor will Magistrates be the more free from mistakes, by relying on the Authority of Synods, Popes, or General Councils, because such eminent contradictions, and oppositions have appeared amongst each of them, that nothing is more uncertain than their conclusions. As for General Councils, whose Authority is in the greatest estimation of the three, it is plain they are so far from being infallible, that their Decrees have been not only directly opposite to plain Texts of Scripture, and the practice of the Primitive Church, but also against each other; which appeared first in the Council of *Constantine*, the Thirteenth Session, where it was Decreed that the Lords Supper should be given but in one kinde, when nothing is more plaine, than that the Lord Jesus instituted it, the Apostle *Paul* afterwards delivered it to the *Corinths*, and the Primitive Church received it, with both the Bread, and the Cup.

As *Jer. Taylor* now Bishop of *Down* in his Liber. of Proph. Sect. 6. at large proves.

Mat. 26. 26, 27. 1 Cor. 11. 24, 25

So for the Council of *Trent*, to Decree that the Service in the Church should be performed in Latine, how contrary is it to the Doctrine of *Paul*, who said in the Church, *He had rather speak five words with understanding, that he might teach others, than ten thousand words in an unknown Tongue.* So also have they clashed one with another, the Council of *Trent* allowing Picturing of God the Father, the Council of *Nice* altogether disallowing of it, and in the great *Arrian* Controversie, which was no circumstantial business, how many Councils and Conventions, were both for, and against it.

1 Cor. 14. 19.

As

As little reliance can be put on any ſuppoſed infalibility the *Pope* may have; there having been two or three at one time, each rageing againſt the other, with their cenſures and decrees: and notorious it is, what deſcention there was amongſt the *Popes*, and Cardinals about *Pope Formoſus*, who being firſt Biſhop of *Pontiniake* was degraded by *Pope John* the 8*th*. and made to take an oath to lead a ſecular life al his daies, yet by *Pope Martin* that ſucceeded *John*, was *Formoſus* releaſed from his Oath, reſtored to his Biſhoprick, and afterwards came to be *Pope*, & ſo continued 5. years, making ſeveral Decrees; but *Stephen* the 6*th*. coming to the Popedome, abrogates the decrees of *Formoſus*, takes up his body, cuts off two of his fingers, throws them into the river *Tiber*, & then buries him in a laymans Sepulchre: Next to *Stephen*, ſucceeded *Romanus*, who on the other hand repeals the Acts and Decrees of his Predeceſſor *Stephen* againſt *Formoſus*, & *Pope John* the 10*th*. in a Synode at *Ravena*, ratifies all the decrees and doings of *Formoſus*, yet after all this, comes *Pope Sergius*, digs up again *Formoſus*, cuts off his Head, and 3 more of his fingers, and throws his body into *Tiber*, likewiſe depoſed all ſuch as had been conſecrated by him; Al which Schiſmes and diſcenſions, makes it plain to the World, that there is nothing of infallibility in the *Popes*.

Benedict the Silveſt 3. Gregory 6. For Acts and Monuments, vol *Page* 188.

And for National Conventions and Synods, they are ſo far from any ſhew of infallibility, that the ſame complexion and temper the Nation is of wherein they are called, and have their promotions, you ſhall be ſure to find them of, becauſe they have their dependency on the Authority that calls them together. So that although the laſt National Synod in this Nation, would have eſtabliſhed *Presbytery*, becauſe that then was moſt like to take, yet it is very queſtionable, if now a Convention be called, whether it will be much talked of amongſt them.

Then this muſt be concluded from all, that ſeeing Magiſtrates themſelves General Councils, *Popes*, or National Synods may erre, in judging and determining the moſt weighty Controverſies in Religion, there can therefore be no ſecurity for a Magiſtrate that he doth well, in perſecuting or putting to Death the contrary minded, in religious matters, ſeeing thorow miſtake he may as ſoon perſecute, or put to death, the true followers of the Lord Jeſus, or anyother; yea, in likelihood much ſooner, be-

cause they in conscience towards God, cannot receive the inventions and traditions of men, in the Worship of God, but must be a witness for the eternal God against them, for which they are accounted (as the Saints of old) pestilent fellows, movers of sedition, turners of the World upside down, enemies to *Cesar*, and upon this account persecuted, when the greatest part of men being unregenerate, and have no other Spirit in them, but what is of this World; there is therefore no reason why the World shou'd persecute and hate his own.

*Acts* 24. 5, 12. Chap. 17. 6, 7.

Fifthly, For Magistrates to inflict temporal punishments upon any of their Subjects, for not conforming to their decrees, that enjoyn any Spiritual Worship or Service, is undoubtedly a breach of that Royal Law, which sayes, That whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do you even so to them, for this is the Law and the *Prophets*; and is a sure and standing rule, by which all men, if they would deal ingeniously by themselves, might measure the justice of their proceedings towards others, for who, that was not a desperate enemy to himself, would put out another mans eye, if he were sure his own should be put out as soon as he had done, as he was to be served by the *Judicial* Law, neither would those that are forward to persecute, be very zealous in their proceedings, if they were sure, that those whom they persecute, should have power on their sides, to meet the same measure unto them; and this is worthy of observation, that this rule of doing as we would be done unto, can be received, and pleaded by all sorts of men, whilst they are under affliction and persecution, but who remembers it, when they have power to afflict and persecute others: the *Papists* themselves, when out of power in this and other Nations can plead against persecution for their conscience, as they did in the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, procuring the Letters of the Emperour, and other Princes, to intercede for some places to be allowed, where they may worship by themselves; but in this they desired more than themselves would allow to others, when in power, so many of the *Protestants*, where the Magistrate is different from them in Religion, can be very well pleased with a tolleration and: *Martin Luther* in his Sermon of the *Good Shepheard*, englished by *W. G.* in the year 1581. speaking of the Kingdom of Christ, saith it is not governed at all by any force or power, but by outward Preaching alone, that is, by the Gospel; why therefore

*Matt.* 7. 12.

Annales of *Eliz.* written by *Camden* Page 20.

As in *France*

Pag. 81. of his Book.

cannot

cannot the *Protestants*, who would seem to have an honourable Esteem of this man, be of the same Spirit, and the Papists be as much for Liberty in prosperity, as in adversity, seeing the Lord Jesus hath not directed at one time to the use of force and violence, in the work of the Gospel, and at another time, if the civil sword be not to be procured, then to use arguments and perswations; no, at all times the rule which his Disciples must take notice of, sayes, whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do you even so to them, for with what measure ye meet, it shall be measured to you again. *Mat.* 7. 1, 2.

And because mystery *Babylon*, hath not regarded these sayings but exerciseth all manner of cruelties, and deaths upon such as cannot believe as she believes and practises, therefore God will find out a way to retaliate upon her, all the blood of his servants, and in the cup which she hath filled, shall it be filled to her double; how much she hath glorified her self, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her; for she saith in her heart, I sit a Queen, and am no widdow, and shall see no sorrow. As at this day. *Rev.* 18. 6, 7, 8, 9.

Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, Death and Mourning, and Famine, and she shall be utterly burnt with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her, and the Kings of the earth, who have committed fornication, and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail and lament for her, and her Merchants, which are the great men of the earth, who Traffique with her in things costly, delicate and of esteem in the World, and inslaves the souls of men, or (as by the margent it may be read) bodies and souls of men these also shall mourn over her, for no man buyeth their Merchandize any more, and thus the fierceness of Gods wrath will over take her, to the sinking of her like a Milstone into the bottome of the Sea, because the great weight of innocent blood lyeth upon her, for in her will be found the blood of Prophets and of Saints, and all that were slain upon the earth; he that therefore would not partake with her in any of her plagues, let him flee from her, and partake not with here in any of her sins (one of the greatest, being the persecution of men for keeping a good conscience) for except the great God should cease to be what he is, if men repent not of their deeds, there will be as certainly punishment, as there is sin, and it shall not be the arm of flesh, that wil be able to support this strumpet, *vers.* 11. 23. *vers.* 19. *vers.* 4.

although many Kingdomes should ingage in her quarrell, neither shall the wisdome and prudence of great states men be able to keep of her judgements, for if men should cease to do any thing against her, yet God will make the very Elements to fight against her, and will contend with her, by famine, and Pestilence, yea and Sword to, although she feares it not, for God will stire up the 10. Kings to do his will upon her, and by his great works, & judgements, that he will manifest in the Earth, will he gain himself a name, and great honour and glory even so Amen.

As it is no waies lawful from the word of God, for Christian Magistrates in the daies of the Gospell, to destroy, and root out the contrary minded in religious matters (although Idolaters,) so such proceedings may somtimes prove inconsistent, with the very being of Nations, for suppose any Nation were wholly Heathenish idolators, and the word of God coming in amongst them, should convert the cheife Magistrate, and one twentieth part of the Nation more; must he then with that twentieth part, destroy all the other nineteen, if they will not be converted, but continue in their Heathenish Idolatry? it cannot possibly be supposed to be warrantable: and this reason holds good likewise against the rooting up and destroying Hericks, out of the world, because if the Church proceeds against any of her members to Excomunication, the Churches deportment towards him so cast out, is to be the same as towards a Heathen, so saith Christ himself, If he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an Heathen man, and a Publican, who for the aforesaid reason is not to be destroyed because he is so: and moreover seeing the Lord who is aboundantly Mercifull, many times give repentance not only to the unbeleeving Idolater, but also to the excomunicated person, he therefore that destroyes the body of such a one, doth as much as in him lyeth destroy his soul also; for the Lord you see brings into his vineyard, some at the third hour, some at the sixth, some at the ninth, and others at the eleventh: he therefore that shall destroy any at the third, or fixth hour of the life, hinders his conversion that possiblely may be called at the ninth, or eleventh hour. And so may be charged with bringing eternall losse and dammage, to him whom he destroyed

Mat. 18. 17.

Mat. 11.

Object.

*Objct.* But whereas the Example of the Kings of *Israel* and *Juda*, is made the greatest Pillar to support the Magistrates proceedings under the Gospel, in persecuting, and punishing, the contrary minded in religious matters, or such as shall be judged guilty of Blasphemy, or Idolatry; therefore the second *Cannon* of the *English* Church, tells us, Whosoever shall affirme, that the Kings Majesty hath not the same Authority in causes Ecclesiasticall, that the godly Kings had amongst the *Jews*, shall be Excomunicated: but if Magistrates would deferre persecuting any man for religion, untill the Clergy had proved this unto them, it would be happy for the most Conscientious under them, and themselves too.

*Answ.* But in answer, we deny not, but the Kings of the *Jews* had power to punish Idolatours, and Blasphemers, and some other transgressors of the then Law of God; which power was given them of God, and written in plain precepts, in the *Mosaical* Law, but who tells them that Magistrates under the Gospel Dispensation, hath such power? hath the Lord Jesus said any such thing? or if he have where is it written? nay where is it written from the beginning of *Genesis*, to the end of the *Revelations*, that Magistrates under the Gospel, should have the same power in Religious causes, as those under the Law? If the judiciall Law be a rule, for Magistrates under the Gospel to walk by, then why must it be mangled in peeces, and just so much taken of it as suites their interest, and all the rest rejected? Is it left to Magistrates now, or was it ever left to the Jewish Kings, to take what part of it they please to be a rule to them, and reject all the rest, and it is eminently remarkable, how this plea is by the Clergy themselves that most contend for it, made together invalid, for by it they will stirre up the Civill Magistrate, to punish those that dissents from them about the Doctrine and worship, under the notion of Blasphemers or Hereticks, and against such this Law must be held Authentick, but he that smiteth or curseth his Father, ot Mother, or stealeth a man, or him that committeth Adultery, or breaketh the Sabboth; who were all of them sure to be put to death by the same judiciall Law, yet in these cases they will not tell the Magistrate it is any rule, but is to be rejected, because here they cannot much make it reach their supposed Hereticks, who they

they are more jealous of, then any of the aforementioned offenders.

But besides, it is observable, that the Kings of the *Jews*, all the time they kept to the Law of God, had advantages to give Righteous Judgement in Spiritual Causes, (which Magistrates under the Gospel have not) for they had that standing Oracle of God amongst them, the Urim and Thumum, together with extraordinary Prophets, which in all difficult Cases they had recourse unto, and would infallibly direct them, to judge according to the Mind of God, but when these Kings became wicked, and lost the benefit of the abovesaid Oracle, and extraordinary Prophets, then although they had the written Law amongst them) did they run headlong into grosse mistakes, that the True Prophets of the Lord were sure to be persecuted, and those Prophets which would propheſie smooth things unto them, were cherish'd, although many times by hearkening unto them, they lost their Kingdomes, Lives, and it is to be feared, Souls and all; How grosly did *Ahab* mistake, when he accounted *Elijah* the troubler of *Israel*, and caused poor *Micaiah* to be imprisoned, and fed with bread and water of affliction, because he would not help to deceive him, at his* 400. time serving Prophets had done: So *Jeremiah* was accused for seeking the hurt of his Nation, and not the welfare, and must be put in a miery Dungeon, because he in plainness delivered the Mind of the Lord to the King, his Princes and People; how therefore can the Gentile Rulers assure themselves, they do any better then these Rulers did, if they shall persecute the contrary minded in Religious matters, seeing they have neither an infallible Oracle to inquire at, nor extraordinary Prophet, nor yet such written precepts, as the *Jews* under the *Mosaical* Law had, that did not onely direct them what offenders should be punished, but also what the particular punishment to every several offence should be.

1 Kings 18. 17

*Chap.* 22. 6. 17.

* 400 False Prophets must eat bread at *Jezebels* table, when *Micaiah* must have bread and water of affliction. *Jer.* 8. 4, 5, 6. As it hath been in our day.

Furthermore, it is very plain, that the Gospel which we live under, is clear another Dispensation, far different in all its Ordinances, and Administration from the Law; under which the Lord Jesus is the only Law-giver, who doth not (as *Moses*) proceed against the Transgressors of his Precepts, by External force and power, to the destroying them in their Bodies, and

Estates

Eſtates, in this life, but in long ſufferings waits on men, not willing they ſhould periſh, but rather that they ſhould repent and be ſaved. And when any continues in diſobedience to the Goſpel, his puniſhment is eternal in the world to come; therefore as the Apoſtle *Paul* ſaith, Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will bring to light hidden things of darkneſſe, and will make manifeſt the Councels of the Hearts, and then ſhall every man have praiſe of God; the ſame Apoſtle teſtifieth of himſelf, that he was a Blaſphemer and *Perſecutor*, 1 *Tim.* 1. 13. and if the Mind of God had been, that he ſhould have ſuffered death in that Condition, how ſhould he have had repentance given him, and been ſuch a glorious Inſtrument in the Church, as afterwards he was.

1 *Theſ.* 1. 9. 2 *Pet.* 3. 9. *Acts* 17. 31.

1 *Cor.* 4. 5.

And it is too well known, that the *Jews* are the great Blaſphemers againſt our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that is on Earth, yet it is not the mind of the Lord, they ſhould be deſtroyed from the face of the earth, for how then ſhould the Scriptures be fulfilled, wherein God hath promiſed to call them, and make them the moſt Glorious Nation on earth? or how can they be converted, if they be not permitted where the Goſpel is preached? we ſpeak not this in favour of any Blaſphemy, for our Souls abhor it, but becauſe all men that have *Powers* in their hands, might be as tender of the Lives of Men, as the moſt Righteous and Holy God is, who would have men be imitators of himſelf, in mercy and goodneſſe towards others, and he maketh his Sun to riſe on the evil, and on the good, and ſendeth rain on the juſt and unjuſt.

If it ſhall ſtill be objected, that it is inconſiſtent with the ſafety and well being of any Nations, to allow or Tollerate any more waies of worſhip then one: we anſwer, experience hath taught the contrary, to ſeveral Countries of *Europe*, as *France*, and the united *Provinces*, and ſeveral Countries of *Germany*, beſides thoſe that ſay they are the Servants of God, ſhould conclude that to be moſt for the ſafety and well being of their *Countries*, which is moſt agreeable to his heavenly will, declared in his Word: it was the ruine of *Jeroboam*, & almoſt all the Kings of *Iſrael* that ſucceeded him, that they would rather Act by corrupt *Principles* of State-Policy, than by the Word which God had ſpoken; and although God had rent 10 Tribes from *Rehoboam*, and given

en them to him, yet he wanted faith to believe his new Kingdom could any waies be secured to him, or kept from going back to the Linage of *David*, unless he devised some new way of Worship, to keep the People in their own Land, and for his so doing, he thought he had much reason of State; for what *Prince* now will conclude it good Pollicy, to permit his People to go up yearly into his Enemies chief *City* to worship, but will conclude it to be a notable way to alienate the affections of his Subjects from him, to his great prejudice and detriment: thus *Jeroboam* reasons as by his words appears, (take them at length) And *Jeroboam* said in his heart, Now shall the Kingdom return to the house of *David*; if this people go up to do Sacrifice in the house of the Lord at *Jerusalem*, then shall the heart of this People turn again unto their Lord, even unto *Rehoboam* King of *Juda*, and they shall kill me, whereupon the King took Councell, and made two Calves of Gold, and said to them, it is too much for you to go up to *Jerusalem*; behold thy God Oh *Israel*, which brought thee out of the Land of *Egypt*? which Pollicy of his procured this Event, which God denounced against him, saying, I will bring evil upon the house of *Jeroboam*, and will cut off from *Jeroboam*, him that pisseth against the wall, and him that is shut up, and left in *Israel*, and will take away the Remnant of the house of *Jeroboam*, as a man taketh away dung till it be all gone. And for the sin wherein he made *Israel* to sin, is he Branded to all posterity, but on the other hand had he permitted the people to go up to *Jerusalem* to worship, and keep the appointments of God though seemingly against his present interest, then had the Promise of God been made good unto him, which the Prophet *Ahijah* declared long before he came to the Kingdome, Saying, And it shall be (if thou wilt harken unto all that I command thee; and wilt walk in my waies, and do that is right in my sight) to keep my statutes and commandements, as *David* my servant did, that I will be with thee and build thee a sure house, as I built for *David*, and will give *Israel* unto thee. Which things were written for the example of such as should come after, be wise now therefore O ye Kings, be instructed ye Judges of the earth, serve the Lord with fear, and rejoyce with Trembling, *Kiss the Son least he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little, Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.*

1 King 12. 16. 27, 28.

1 Kings 14. 10. 11.

Chap. 11. 38.

Psal 2. 10. 11. 12.

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